



# **LGBT CITIZEN SUMMIT**

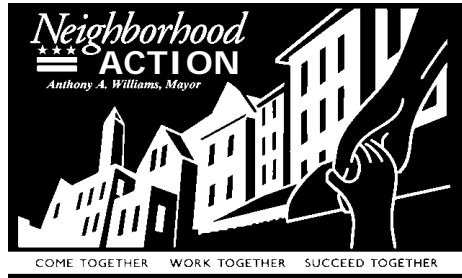
## **APRIL 2005**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & DATA ANALYSIS**

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&  
OFFICE OF NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION  
FEBRUARY 2006



***“The Summit was a rewarding and excellent meeting, the coming together of the LGBT community and the different ethnic backgrounds [created a] warm and easing feeling at the Summit.”***

**- LGBT Citizen Summit Attendee**

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## INTRODUCTION

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On Saturday, April 30, 2005 the first Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Citizen Summit was hosted by Mayor Anthony A. Williams at the Greenleaf Recreation Center. Over three hundred citizens from the LGBT community attended and participated in this groundbreaking event.

Despite the tragic loss of Wanda Alston, the first Director of the Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Affairs, just weeks before the Summit, the LGBT Citizen Summit was still a success in generating genuine discussion – both within the District’s LGBT community and between the LGBT community and the District government.

Members of the Mayor’s Cabinet were in attendance as well as several Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners that are members of the LGBT community and actively participated in LGBT Citizen Summit.

The day’s discussions focused on five discussion topics that were determined by the LGBT Executive Committee in consultation with the Office of LGBT Affairs:

- Increasing Communication and Relationships
- Community Youth Challenges
- Business Development Challenges
- Community Health Challenges
- Public Safety Challenges

The identified discussion areas though specific, were broad enough to encompass the discussion of topics such as zoning relief for LGBT establishments and gay marriage. Summit participants were engaged throughout the day, offering relevant and valuable feedback. Participants were provided worksheets for each discussion item and guided through the process by a facilitator, using the established Citizen Summit model.

Our goal for the LGBT Citizen Summit was to engage the community in a dedicated forum, about their priorities and concerns, and to increase the capacity of the LGBT community to interact and engage one another and the DC Government about these issues. The success of our first LGBT Citizen Summit will serve as foundation for future summits and community meetings with the District’s LGBT community.

## **DISCUSSION SUMMARIES**

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Summaries of each the five discussion topics were compiled by reviewing and theming the comments provided by participants and facilitators on the five discussion topics. The first section “Overview Discussion Summaries” presents the major themes of each topic, the second section “Detailed Discussion Summaries” presents the major themes of each topic with additional comments and details on each topic.

### **Increase Communication and Relationships**

- Support for more diversity and sensitivity training for DC Government employees to increase the cultural competency and awareness of the LGBT community.
- Create a central index of government services with a LGBT focus.
- Better promotion of existing services.
- Improve communication between DC Government and the LGBT community.

### **Community Youth Challenges**

- Create more safe spaces for LGBT youth.
- Sensitivity training for teachers and youth workers.
- Involve stakeholders in developing a zero-tolerance approach to the intimidation of LGBT youth.
- Promotion of adoptive families and advocates for LGBT in foster care.

### **Business Challenges**

- Provide formal recognition and benefits by business to domestic and same-sex partnerships.
- Create and promote a directory of LGBT-friendly businesses.
- Understand the economic impact of LGBT community and LGBT special events on District businesses.

### **Community Health Challenges**

- Provide sensitivity and awareness training for health providers.
- Improve access to health care for the under/un-insured.
- Improve collection of health data specific to LGBT community.
- Improve public education efforts and dissemination of health information.

### **Public Safety Challenges**

- Improve the reporting and data collection of hate crimes.
- Improve services and support for victims of same-sex domestic violence.
- Improve interaction between public safety personnel and LGBT community.

## DETAILED DISCUSSION SUMMARIES

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### INCREASE COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIPS

“Utilize the position of [LGBT Affairs] to stay in touch with the LGBT groups and keep open communication allowing the DC Government to be aware of our needs and concerns.”

“Convene regular listening and dialogue sessions between citizens and the government.”

- *LGBT Citizen Summit Attendees*

#### **Discussion Summary**

Diversity & Sensitivity Training: The first consensus of the day was the recommendation that the DC Government develop and provide a diversity and sensitivity training program for all government employees. This training will increase the cultural competency and awareness of employees when they are working with members of the LGBT community and will hopefully lead to better customer service.

Index of LGBT services in DC Government: Throughout the day, the challenge of locating LGBT-focused services within DC Government was brought into the discussions at the tables. The desire is for a single index that would allow individuals to locate services and offices that assist the LGBT community. Once created the index and the services available should be better promoted to the LGBT community.

Improve communication between DC Government and the LGBT community: While there are many services available and organizations that are working with the DC Government, too few people know about these services. Better outreach to the LGBT community and better promotion of existing services are two simple steps that can help support an improved relationship between the DC Government and the LGBT community. There is also strong support for more meetings and workshops between the DC Government and the LGBT community where ideas and issues can be discussed.

#### **Additional Themes & Values from Participant Comments**

- Support data collection in all LGBT priority areas and improve use of existing data.
- Provide cultural competency or awareness training in all District organizations that interact with the LGBT community.
- Ensure the permanency of the LGBT Office.
- Create an LGBT Community Center, which could be named after Wanda Alston, the center should focus on general health, safety and welfare issues.
- Increased compliance by DC government agencies of the Language Access Act.
- Create a newsletter dealing with LGBT issues from the DC Government to the community.
- Have representative not only on the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), but at every District Government department and agency.

- Utilize the position of the Office of LGBT Affairs to stay in touch with LGBT groups and keep an open communication allowing the DC Government to be aware of our needs and concerns.
- Appoint LGBT people to city planning and zoning commissions.
- Expand government support for capacity building for community based LGBT organizations

## COMMUNITY YOUTH CHALLENGES

“Accept and respect the differences of a person’s culture even though you don’t understand specifics aspects of their behavior.”

“Promote mandatory teacher and youth worker in-service training on LGBT issues and influence sensitivity curriculum.”

- *LGBT Citizen Summit Attendees*

### Summary

Creation of Safe Spaces for LGBT Youth: There was a consensus among those participating in the Summit that safe spaces need to be created for LGBT youth that offer:

- Training
- Information on available health care
- Mental health counseling
- Legal resources
- Social activities
- Opportunities to explore the cultural context of their sexual identity

Safe spaces must be created in schools, and incorporated as part of health education, recreation, and sensitivity training initiatives. Programs must be developed in an inclusionary manner, to the extent possible (such as gay/straight alliances), so as not to offend youth questioning their sexuality.

Safe spaces must extend beyond the normal hours of operation of community-based organizations. Existing supportive programs and opportunities for LGBT youth must be identified, and share/disseminate information about such programs in a more effective manner.

Provide Sensitivity Trainings for Teachers and Youth Workers: Participants recommend that schools hire LGBT counselors, who are available to student and teachers to address problems such as bullying and intimidation and facilitate positive dialogs on tolerance, acceptance of diversity and human rights.

Peer counseling and mentoring programs must also be encouraged. Participants also recommended that accreditation education programs are developed that not only addresses LGBT issues, but all adolescent issues that cross cultural boundaries.

Involvement of key stakeholders in developing a zero-tolerance approach to the intimidation of LGBT youth: To fully address the challenges facing LGBT youth, teachers, school administrators, parents, the School Board, City Council, Mayor's Office, community leaders, and faith-based organizations must adhere to a zero tolerance approach against bullying, intimidation and harassment. Participants recommended that schools be required to report incidences of intimidation and discrimination against LGBT youth to ensure that schools establish and enforce anti-harassment policies.

Promote Adoptive Families and Advocates for LGBT in Foster Care: Participants advocated for the creation of a support network for LGBT youth in foster care. Participants recommend that there be increased collaboration between Child and Family Services, DC Public Schools, and community-based health, advocacy, and support organizations to address the issues facing older youth transitioning to independence.

#### **Additional Themes & Values from Participant Comments**

- Educate youth on LGBT health issues and advocate for strengthened health programs focusing on LGBT youth.
- Promote participation in Mayor's Youth Institute for LGBT Youth.
- Create a position to allow a LGBT student to serve on or advise the DC School Board.
- Provide LGBT counselors for students and teachers.
- Create an office dedicated to serve LGBT Youth.

### **BUSINESS CHALLENGES**

“Help the businesses understand the diversity of the [LGBT] community beyond the stereotypes.”

“Important for the business community to value and include all, makes better companies and better communities.”

*- LGBT Citizen Summit Attendees*

#### **Summary**

Provide formal recognition and benefits by business to domestic/same-sex partnerships:

There was tremendous support for formal recognition of domestic and same-sex partnerships and all of the benefits that couples and individuals would realize. From simplifying real estate purchases, income taxes, to providing health benefits to one's partner. There was also support for the DC Government to support these efforts by

awarding additional “points” when assessing contracts, much like the existing Local, Small, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (LSDBE) programs.

Creation of a directory of LGBT-friendly businesses: There’s a strong desire for the LGBT community to support LGBT business owners and to keep LGBT spending in DC. A proposed LGBT business directory would not only identify LGBT-friendly businesses based on their services offered, but would also list companies that provide domestic and same-sex partnership benefits.

Document the economic impact of LGBT community and LGBT special events in the District: There was strong support for economic studies to be performed to fully understand and appreciate the impact the LGBT community has on the District, especially when the city hosts annual special events that are nationally known, like Capitol Pride and Black Pride. The position offered by participants is that if the economic effects were better understood, we would see additional promotion of these special events by other entities that promote tourism and business development in the District, and thus, benefiting not only the LGBT community but the rest of the District as well.

#### **Additional Themes & Values from Participant Comments**

- Provide and publicize economic support and zoning relief for LGBT businesses displaced by the planned baseball stadium.
- Promote LGBT small businesses and the LSDBE program to LGBT businesses
- Simplify and provide better support for the business startup process and interaction with the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) (an issue not unique to LGBT businesses in the District).
- Provide centralized business resource information for the LGBT business community (an issue not unique to LGBT businesses in the District).

### **COMMUNITY HEALTH CHALLENGES**

“Provide better training for health professionals so LGBT patients are not marginalized.”

“Separate the EMS from DC Fire and empower EMS to train and support their staff to service the LGBT community.”

*- LGBT Citizen Summit Attendees*

#### **Summary**

Health Provider Training: Summit participants told us that health care providers need to be better informed and more sensitive to the physical health and mental health service needs and treatment of LGBT consumers, particularly with respect to LGBT youth,



seniors, and transgender persons. Specific recommendations offered by participants include:

- Health providers should receive sensitivity training.
- Increase knowledge about the HIV/AIDS interventions and prevention strategies.
- Increase awareness of available resources to address substance abuse.
- Increase awareness of resources for victims of domestic violence.
- Increase awareness of sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs) other than HIV/AIDS.

Health Care for the Under/Uninsured: Summit participants expressed a concern that too many LGBT persons have inadequate healthcare coverage, particularly those individuals working in low-paying jobs.

Specific recommendations include:

- Information about the District's health care delivery system, including specific eligibility and enrollment information, must be more widely disseminated and accessible.
- The District must ensure that information on access to health care is current, and written in multiple languages.
- Prevention and early intervention programs should be based in the community (in schools and churches).

Data Collection and Public Education/Dissemination of Information: Data collection on HIV rates, and targeted public education efforts, were recurring themes throughout the discussion on health challenges. Participants suggested that a "health indices registry" be established on highly prevalent health conditions such as HIV/AIDS, cancer, mental health etc., with information on prevention strategies, and available community resources. A number of participants recommended increased condom distribution in bookstores, barbershops, movie theaters, coffee shops etc. as one example of an effective STD/HIV/AIDS prevention and public education strategy.

### **Additional Themes & Values from Participant Comments**

- Create LGBT Patients Bill of Rights.
- Pay LGBT community service providers on a timely basis.
- Need to better address and service transgender health Issues.
- Encourage the local medical schools focus on LGBT health issues.
- Act on existing public health data in the District.
- Expand programs to provide additional access to insurance.
- Continue to assess programs and service priorities.
- Ensure a lesbian and senior focus of healthcare programs.
- Ensure programs are established that address the needs of the aging LGBT community.
- Establish new priorities and programs for mental health services.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY CHALLENGES**

“MPD should be trained to ask questions sensitively and not judge, that is what the judge is for.”

“Train all law enforcement to be culturally competent. Designate liaison from every department not just police, especially Fire/EMS, who can facilitate sensitivity training within their own department.”

“Increase the [Gay and Lesbian Liaison Unit] patrols; we don’t all live in Dupont [Circle].”

*- LGBT Citizen Summit Attendees*

### **Summary**

Improve Reporting and Data Collection of Hate Crimes: Participants want to see improvements to the reporting and data collection of hate crimes and other crimes that are LGBT-related. A public information campaign to encourage the reporting of these crimes as well as publicizing the increased enforcement could lead to a decrease in these crimes. Simple measures, such as the creation of a hotline to facilitate reporting and better data collection standards, could help provide the data needed to develop new solutions.

Services and support for victims of same-sex domestic violence: Participants recommended providing more outreach and services to victims of same-sex domestic violence. New programs and resources need to be developed for this issue. One specific suggestion was the creation of dedicated shelter space for abused men. The challenge here as participants highlighted, is drawing attention and resources to this problem of domestic violence and sexual assault *within* the LGBT community, in addition to still being able to adequately address hate crimes and other LGBT-related crimes.

Improve Interactions between LGBT citizens and public safety personnel: Participants highlighted the need for public safety personnel to be more sensitive when responding to emergencies and crimes involving LGBT residents, particularly transgender persons. One suggestion is to implement diversity/sensitivity/cultural competency training of all public safety personnel, especially MPD, Fire & EMS, and 311/911 call center personnel. This training should become part of the standard training regimen and the District should impose zero tolerance for the mistreatment of LGBT citizens. The desire was also expressed by participants to add transgender persons as a protected class in existing discrimination laws.

### **Additional Themes & Values from Participant Comments**

- Improve focus on youth prostitution, target specific geographic areas in the city and provide alternatives and services (housing, education, health, jobs).

- Expand the reach of MPD's Gay and Lesbian Liaison (GLLU) unit citywide, internalize GLLU across MPD units and/or designating LGBT Liaisons in each Police District and provide more funding for GLLU.
- Develop a better relationship between MPD and the LGBT community, use entertainment venues (bars, clubs, restaurants) for outreach.
- Develop more personal interactions between officers and community; help expand the trust between MPD and the LGBT community.
- Expand focus of services on neighborhoods beyond Dupont Circle.
- Recruit LGBT for public safety personnel positions.
- Provide more law enforcement and treatment services for substance abuse in the LGBT community.
- Institute higher penalties for hate crimes.
- Protect the needs of incarcerated LGBT persons and providing assistance with reentry.
- Perform outreach to public schools regarding harassment of LGBT persons.
- Use of "pink cars" or "pink berets" as visible MPD resources for LGBT citizens.
- Create safe spaces for transgender persons and LGBT youth.
- Distribute used cell phones to disadvantaged and elderly LGBT citizens.

## **PARTICIPANT EVALUATION**

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“When’s the last time anyone else in the gay community got this many people together in one room and actually had a productive conversation about these issues? Never.”

“We came together in a great number and addressed the issues in the [day’s] plan. Every table made suggestions and options that were doable and attainable.”

*- LGBT Citizen Summit Attendees*

### **Summary**

There was a general level of satisfaction with the first LGBT Citizen Summit, but great support for us to do more. Many of the evaluation comments were of a positive nature, commending the District for this first step in bringing the DC Government and the LGBT community together to discuss common issues and concerns. Many participants noted that this was the first and largest gathering of the LGBT community in the District that saw a genuine and productive discussion around many issues that are of specific concern to the LGBT community.

There was a good deal of support to continue and expand the engagement of the LGBT community by the DC Government by convening additional meetings, expanding the scope of these meetings, and hosting issue-specific forums. The design (the established Citizen Summit process) of the day and the use of facilitators at tables were complimented as well as it helped create and maintain an issue-focused discussion. There were specific requests for the data to be captured electronically in the future, as well as improving the meeting room setting (specifically the sound system).

### **Selected Comments from Evaluations**

What did you like about the day?

- “Nice to see the presence of Mayor’s Cabinet Staff.”
- “The table report outs created a nice interaction.”
- “Liked being able to be part of the discussion and to see DC officials actively listening to the concerns being raised.”
- “Citizens having discussion among diverse communities on various topics
- “Bringing together of the LGBT Community.”
- “Got better understanding of the City’s willingness to reach out.”
- “Liked the small setting.”
- “Good process of identification and discussion of issues.”
- “Experts on hand to discuss solutions to complex problems.”
- “Incorporation and discussion of youth issues.”
- “Group discussion at tables.”
- “Baseball displacement issue discussion.”
- “It ran on time.”
- “Mental health and substance abuse treatment services.”

- “Chance to hear Stacy Long and Carlene Cheatham.”

How could the day have been better?

- “Improve the sound system.”
- “Time of the event, 8:00 am start too early.”
- “Timing of the event, better use of time during the day.”
- “Would like to see more city Councilmembers at the summit.”
- “More participation of youth.”
- “Too busy with too much conversation.”
- “More time for discussion, Less side-bar conversations, more control by facilitators.”
- “Computers for data recording.”

Additional comments:

- “Send a reply to each participant to evaluate community process on each issue prior to next summit.”
- “This coincided with national LGBT event in Philadelphia.”
- “Warm and easing feeling at the summit.”
- “Very important to form an advisory committee to help compose a comprehensive report of the ideas generated today.”
- “A centralized resource website for the LGBT community is very important, advertise it.”
- “Create an office of policy research to collect and analyze data on the LGBT community in DC.”
- “Good to hold everything in a non-LGBT neighborhood.”
- “Thank you for the tribute to Wanda Alston.”
- “Improved outreach for the event.”

## LGBT CITIZEN SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS DEMOGRAPHICS SUMMARY

Note: Participation in the demographic survey was voluntary.

| Ward  | %     |
|---|-------|
| 1   | 12.1% |
| 2   | 22.1% |
| 3   | 7.4%  |
| 4   | 9.4%  |
| 5   | 12.8% |
| 6   | 14.1% |
| 7   | 4.0%  |
| 8   | 2.7%  |
| Other   | 15.4% |
|   |       |
| Gender  |       |
| Female  | 37.7% |
| Male  | 58.9% |
| Transgender                                       | 3.4%  |
|   |       |
| Age   |       |
| Under 22  | 1.4%  |
| 23 to 34  | 21.1% |
| 35 to 54  | 64.8% |
| Over 55   | 12.7% |
|   |       |
| Race  |       |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native                    | 2.0%  |
| Asian/Pacific Islander                            | 6.0%  |
| Black or African American, not Latino             | 38.0% |
| White, not Latino                                 | 46.7% |
| Latino  | 4.7%  |
| Interracial                                       | 1.3%  |
| Other   | 1.3%  |
|   |       |
| I Identify as:                                    |       |
| Gay   | 50.0% |
| Bisexual  | 6.4%  |
| Lesbian   | 31.4% |
| Transgender                                       | 2.6%  |
| Heterosexual                                      | 5.1%  |
| Other   | 4.5%  |
|   |       |
| Have you participated in a Citizen Summit before? |       |
| Yes   | 38.4% |
| No  | 61.6% |
|   |       |

## **ISSUE AREAS REVIEW**

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Participants used worksheets throughout the day to assist them in their discussion, below are two of the worksheets. The first worksheet, *Straw-Person Options*, provided participants with suggested areas of focus for each of the topic areas. The second worksheet, *Matrix with Citywide Strategic Plan Priority Areas*, showed participants how the topic areas being discussed connected with the priority areas from the Mayor's Citywide Strategic Plan.

### **Straw-Person Options for each Issues Area as Developed by the LGBT Executive Committee Program Group**

#### **I. Youth (13-21)**

1. Safe After-School Programs for LGBT Youth
2. Enforce Anti-Bullying Act in DCPS
3. Health Education/Health Promotion HIV/AIDS, Health Issues, STD's for LGBT Youth
4. Promote participation in Mayor's Youth Institute for LGBT Youth

#### **II. Business**

1. Regulations regarding zoning for Bars
2. Promote LGBT Small Business & LSBDE Program to LGBT Businesses
3. Promote Black PRIDE and Capitol PRIDE e.g., Economic Study on Success of these events to local economy
4. Work w/ DC Businesses to Adopt Domestic Partnerships for their Employees
5. Promote Visibility/Role of Metro PEN/LGBT Chamber of Commerce

#### **III. Health and Assessing Programs/Service Priorities**

1. Access to HealthCare for Uninsured/Vulnerable
2. STD & HIV/AIDS – priorities for programs and services development
3. Mental Health – priorities for programs and services development
4. Substance Abuse Including Tobacco – priorities for programs and services development
5. Ensure Lesbian & Senior Focus

#### **IV. Public Safety**

1. Protecting & Supporting LGBT Youth & Families (e.g., Strengthening Domestic Partnership; Adoption; Foster Care, Mentoring LGBT Children)
2. Violence/Crime against LGBT community and/or Involving LGBT citizens
3. Support GLLU Unit

#### **V. Improving Communication and Relationships (Making Government Work)**

1. Data Collection in all LGBT priority areas
2. Cultural Competency for all LGBT Services
3. Promote Access to Literacy, Job Training, & Education Programs for LGBT

# ISSUE AREAS IDENTIFIED BY LGBT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE • MATRIX WITH CITYWIDE STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY AREAS

| LGBT Community Priority Issue Areas  | Citywide Strategic Plan Priority Areas   |   |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|
|  | A.<br><i>Strengthening Children Youth, Families &amp; Elders</i>   | B.<br><i>Building Sustainable Neighborhoods</i>   | C.<br><i>Promoting Economic Development</i>  | D.<br><i>Making Government Work</i>   | E.<br><i>Enhance Unity of Purpose/Democracy</i>  |
| <b>I</b><br><i>Youth Challenges</i><br><br><i>Challenges for Youth in DCPS</i> | 1. Safe After-School Programs for LGBT Youth<br><br>2. Health Promotion/Education Services for LGBT Youth<br><br>3. Enforce Anti-Bullying for LGBT Youth in DCPS | 1. Establish SGA's at DCPS high schools   | 1. Get more private LGBT business owners to take youth from the Youth Institute for the Summer | 1. Cultural Competency in All Services to LGBT<br><br>2. Need to Collect Data to Document LGBT Issues | 1. Support Mayor's Youth Institute for openly LGBT high school students  |
| <b>II</b><br><i>Business</i>   | 1. Work with DC Businesses to adopt Domestic Partnership for their Employees   | 1. Promote Black and Capitol Prides & other Traditional LGBT Events                                 | 1. Location of Business Zones -- LGBT Bars<br><br>2. Promote LSBDE to LGBT businesses          | 1. Cultural Competency in All Services to LGBT<br><br>2. Need to Collect Data to Document LGBT Issues | 1. Promote Visibility/ Role of Metro PEN/LGBT Chamber of Commerce  |
| <b>III</b><br><i>Health</i>  | 1. Access to Healthcare for LGBT Uninsured/Vulnerable<br><br>2. Mental Health<br><br>3. Substance Abuse<br><br>4. STD & HIV/AIDS                                 | 1. Expand the number and location of neighborhood community health centers and primary care clinics |  | 1. Cultural Competency in All Services to LGBT<br><br>2. Need to Collect Data to Document LGBT Issues | 1. Assess Health Status of LGBT DC Residents vis-a-vis comparable US Metro Regions & Assess Implications for Access to Healthcare Services for LGBT DC Residents |
| <b>IV</b><br><i>Public Safety</i>  | 1. Violence/Crime Targeting LGBT and/or Involving LGBT<br><br>2. Protecting & Supporting LGBT Youth & Families   | 1. Violence/Crime Targeting LGBT and/or Involving LGBT<br><br>2. Support the GLLU Unit              |  | 1. Cultural Competency in All Services to LGBT<br><br>2. Need to Collect Data to Document LGBT Issues | 1. Promote Programs that Protect & Support LGBT Youth & Families   |
| <b>V</b><br><i>Making Government Work</i>                                      |  |   |  | 1. Cultural Competency in All Services to LGBT<br><br>2. Need to Collect Data to Document LGBT Issues | 1. Promote Access to Literacy, Job Training, & Education Programs for LGBT Adults  |